

4.5 PSP Cover Sheet (Attach to the front of each proposal)

Proposal Title: Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge Acquisitions
 Applicant Name: Howard Stark, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 Mailing Address: 2233 Watt Avenue, Suite 375, Sacramento, CA 95825
 Telephone: (916) 979-2085
 Fax: (916) 979-2092
 Email: howard_stark@mail.fws.gov

Amount of funding requested: \$ 5,065,030 for 1 years (can be phased)

Indicate the Topic for which you are applying (check only one box).

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fish Passage/Fish Screens | <input type="checkbox"/> Introduced Species |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Habitat Restoration | <input type="checkbox"/> Fish Management/Hatchery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Watershed Stewardship | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water Quality | |

Does the proposal address a specified Focused Action? yes ☒ no

What county or counties is the project located in? Sacramento and Yolo

Indicate the geographic area of your proposal (check only one box):

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sacramento River Mainstem | <input type="checkbox"/> East Side Trib: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sacramento Trib: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Suisun Marsh and Bay |
| <input type="checkbox"/> San Joaquin River Mainstem | <input type="checkbox"/> North Bay/South Bay: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> San Joaquin Trib: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape (entire Bay-Delta watershed) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Delta: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Indicate the primary species which the proposal addresses (check all that apply):

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> San Joaquin and East-side Delta tributaries fall-run chinook salmon | <input type="checkbox"/> Spring-run chinook salmon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Winter-run chinook salmon | <input type="checkbox"/> Fall-run chinook salmon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Late-fall run chinook salmon | <input type="checkbox"/> Longfin smelt |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Delta smelt | <input type="checkbox"/> Steelhead trout |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Splittail | <input type="checkbox"/> Striped bass |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Green sturgeon | <input type="checkbox"/> All chinook species |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migratory birds | <input type="checkbox"/> All anadromous salmonids |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Sacramento Splittail</u> | |

Giant garter snake, Valley elderberry long horn beetle, vernal pool species

Specify the ERP strategic objective and target (s) that the project addresses. Include page numbers from January 1999 version of ERP Volume I and II:

Goal 2: Objective 1/Target 1; Objective 2/Target 1; Objective 6/Target 1

~~Goal 4: Objective 4/Target 1; Subobjective (f.e. wetland) Target 1; Subobjective (s. wetland) Target 1; Subobjective (r&r aquatic)/Target 1; Subobjective (fw fish)/Target 1; Subobjective (per. grassland)/Target 1; Subobjective (ag land)/Target 1~~

Goal 3 (Stressors): Levees/Target 1; Invasive plants/Target 1; Invasive Riparian/Target 1; Fish and Wildlife Harvest/Target 1

Indicate the type of applicant (check only one box):

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> State agency | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public/Non-profit joint venture | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local government/district | <input type="checkbox"/> Private party |
| <input type="checkbox"/> University | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Indicate the type of project (check only one box):

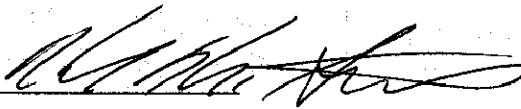
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implementation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring | <input type="checkbox"/> Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research | |

By signing below, the applicant declares the following:

- 1.) The truthfulness of all representations in their proposal;
- 2.) The individual signing the form is entitled to submit the application on behalf of the applicant (if the applicant is an entity or organization); and
- 3.) The person submitting the application has read and understood the conflict of interest and confidentiality discussion in the PSP (Section 2.4) and waives any and all rights to privacy and confidentiality of the proposal on behalf of the applicant, to the extent as provided in the Section.

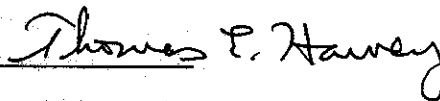
Howard K. Stark

Printed name of applicant



Thomas E. Harvey

Signature of applicant



TITLE PAGE

Project name: Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge Land and Water Right Acquisitions
Amount requested: \$5,065,030

Primary Contact (Howard Stark) and Secondary Contact (Thomas Harvey)

Howard K. Stark, Chief
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Sacramento Realty Field Office
2233 Watt Avenue, Suite 375
Sacramento, CA 95825
Phone: (916) 979-2085
Fax: (916) 979-2092
email: Howard_Stark@mail.fws.gov

Thomas E. Harvey, Project Leader
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge
2233 Watt Avenue, Suite 230
Sacramento, CA 95825
Phone: (916) 979-2085
Fax: (916) 979-2058
email: Thomas_Harvey@mail.fws.gov

Participants/Collaborators in Implementation:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2233 Watt Avenue, Suite 375
Sacramento, CA 95825
Phone: 916/979-2085
Fax: 916/979-2092

Trust for Public Land
116 New Montgomery, Third Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
Phone: 415/ 495-5660
Fax: 415/ 495-0541

Contacts: Howard K. Stark, Realty Chief
Thomas E. Harvey, Project Leader

Contact: Mike Reeves, Field Representative

Properties 1,2,3, & 4
Elk Grove, California
(names provided upon request)

Delta Sugar Corporation
Clarksburg, California
Contact: Andy Hitchings, De Cuir and Somach
Phone: 916/446-7979
Fax: 916/446-8199

Type of Organization and Tax Status: Public--Federal Government, tax exempt

Tax Identification Number: Not applicable

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) Sacramento Realty Office will be the lead contact for acquisition of the water right and four properties. The Service is supported in this effort by the Trust for Public Land, which has agreed to assist by obtaining option agreements or purchasing and holding properties from willing sellers until sufficient funds are available for acquisition by the Service. Upon acquisition, the Service will apply for restoration grants from many sources, such as the North American Wetlands Conservation Council, Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Fund, Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, Wildlife Conservation Board, Central Valley Project Improvement Act, the David and Lucille Packard Foundation, and others.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project name: Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge Land and Water Right Acquisitions

This proposal requests funding to: 1) acquire fee title interest in three properties; 2) acquire an agricultural easement on a fourth property; and 3) purchase water rights in the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta from Delta Sugar Corporation and other diverters. Each of the properties supports existing wildlife values and has outstanding potential for floodplain management, invasive plant control, and wildlife habitat restoration/enhancement. The property owners and Delta Sugar Corp. are willing sellers who have requested appraisals by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service); options have been signed on two of the properties. The David and Lucille Packard Foundation has committed partial funding to assist with protection of Properties 1-3. The City of Sacramento has committed funds to assist with purchase of Property 3. *CALFED is being asked to provide \$5,065,030 to complete the funding process.*

Project Size and Location: The four property acquisitions total 464 acres and are within Stone Lake NWR's approved project boundary in Sacramento County. They are strategically located within the Sacramento/San Joaquin River Delta (North Delta Corridor) and the Cosumnes/Mokelumne Rivers Basin. Three of the four are adjacent to land that is owned, managed, or will be managed as part of Stone Lakes NWR. There is intense pressure to convert land in the Stone Lakes Basin to vineyards and a high likelihood that these properties will be sold to others if the Service does not act quickly. The water right acquisition of approximately 4,000 acre-feet would originate from Courtland, in the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta, and is adjacent to Stone Lakes NWR in eastern Yolo County. (See maps, Appendices A and B.)

Primary Biological/Ecological Objectives: These property and water right acquisitions will:

- Protect agricultural land and habitat in the core of the Refuge project area, where large developments are rapidly converting open space and farmland.
- Contribute to Stone Lakes NWR goals by protecting, restoring, and expanding tidal and seasonal wetlands, lakes, riparian corridors, and upland habitats to benefit fish and wildlife.
- Protect, restore, and expand portions of South Stone Lake and its associated tidal and seasonal wetlands, riparian corridors, and perennial grasslands. This will help restore the historical configuration of South Stone Lake and increase flood storage capacity.
- Restore an existing vineyard (Property #1) to natural features, which will substantially improve habitat and wildlife values on this property.
- Protect three properties that are adjacent to properties currently owned or managed by the Refuge; this connectivity enhances the value of the Stone Lake/Cosumnes Basin.
- Allow expansion of the Refuge's water hyacinth control efforts.
- Enhance the Refuge's ability to maintain restored wetlands, other habitats, and wildlife-friendly farming operations through the water made available through water rights acquisition.
- Complement CALFED mission of restoring ecological health in the northern Delta. Address elements of four of six of the strategic goals listed as 1999 CALFED funding priorities. Address

several CALFED topic areas and CALFED objectives of providing good water quality for beneficial uses, improving/increasing aquatic and terrestrial habitats, and improving ecological functions in the Bay-Delta.

Costs and Third Party Impacts: *The Service is requesting \$5,065,030 from CALFED to complete full funding of all four acquisitions and to acquire the Delta water rights.* The Service has received a commitment from the David and Lucille Packard Foundation to provide \$1,059,300 toward acquisition of Properties 1-3. The City of Sacramento will provide \$170,000 toward purchase of Property 3. Anticipated third party impacts to the local tax base by withdrawal of these lands will be off-set by annual payments in lieu of taxes to Sacramento County pursuant to the Refuge Revenue Sharing Act..

Applicant Qualifications: *Sacramento Realty Office:* The Sacramento Realty Office staff of eight has over 150 years of combined experience in appraisal/realty support. The Service currently manages over 670 square miles of habitat within California and is in the process of completing other CALFED-funded transactions.

Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge (NWR): The Stone Lakes NWR staff currently manages about 1,000 acres of Service-owned land within the Refuge project area and co-manages thousands of additional acres with agencies within the project area. The Service has expended over \$2.64 million for the restoration, enhancement, and management of Refuge lands.

Monitoring and Data Evaluation: This project will be tracked through the Service's Sacramento Realty Office from initiation through purchase. Stone Lakes NWR will provide biological support for the acquisition process and oversee all restoration and management.

Local Support/Coordination with Other Programs: The Stone Lakes NWR land protection program has won support from many legislators, public officials, agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, and constituency groups. Sizeable land donations are pending from two state agencies.

Acquisition and subsequent restoration of these two properties supports the goals and objectives of the Anadromous Fisheries Recovery Plan, the Service's Central Valley San Francisco Bay Ecoregion Plan, the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture Implementation Plan, USFWS Concept Plan for Waterfowl Wintering Habitat Preservation, North American Waterfowl Management Plan, Sacramento County General Plan, several other endangered species recovery plans, and the goals of Stone Lakes NWR. (See letters of support, Appendix D.)

Compatibility with CALFED objectives: Acquisition of these properties can help improve the health of the Bay-Delta ecosystem and the Cosumnes/Mokelumne Rivers floodplain, benefit several priority species and habitats, and yield broad ecosystem benefits. The properties offer restoration potential for many species at risk, including the Delta Smelt, Sacramento splittail, Swainson's hawk, bald eagle, American peregrine falcon, Aleutian Canada goose, giant garter

snake, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, western pond turtle, California hibiscus, vernal pool plant species, and many neotropical migratory songbirds. South Stone Lake and other perennial waters sources offer ideal reintroduction sites for Sacramento perch.

This project is consistent with CALFED'S Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan objectives, complies with relevant laws and regulations, including NEPA/CEQA, will not prejudice CALFED's long term program, and involves only willing sellers.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK

Project Description/Approach: This proposal requests \$5,065,030 to complete funding needed to acquire four properties totaling 464 acres located within the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta and the Cosumnes/Mokelumne Rivers floodplain and to acquire Delta water rights from the Delta Sugar Corporation and other diverters.

Water Right acquisition--\$2,922,110 million needed: The Service is negotiating with Delta Sugar Corporation and other diverters to acquire approximately 4,000 acre-feet of water rights from the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta. Water made available through purchase of water rights from a number of diverters, including Delta Sugar, will be transferred to manage fish and wildlife habitats and wildlife-friendly agricultural lands in the Stone Lakes NWR approved boundary.

Acquisition of four properties--Total cost is \$3,372,220 -- \$2,142,920 needed : The four property owners are willing sellers who have been coordinating with the Service's Sacramento Realty Office for many months. Options have been signed on Property #2 and #3 and are being negotiated on Property #1 and #4. This office will coordinate acquisition of the water rights and the four properties in coordination with the Trust for Public Land. The Service intends to maintain, restore, and manage natural habitat values on the four properties to benefit wildlife, including CALFED Priority I-IV species.

It is crucial that funding for these four properties be secured immediately. Property is selling quickly and vineyards have expanded into the area. Property #1 is already a vineyard; it will undoubtedly remain in vines if sold to agricultural interests, but would be converted to more fish and wildlife-friendly habitat following acquisition by the Service. The properties are listed in priority order and the amount listed is the full acquisition price; cost sharing is noted.

Property #1: \$2,053,511 fee title (*Packard Foundation providing \$750,000*)

Location: The property receives tidal influence from Snodgrass Slough, via South Stone Lake, and the Sacramento Drainage Canal. It is located adjacent to the 220-acre Agriversified property currently owned by the Refuge and adjacent to the 1,567-acre North Stone Lake property, now managed by the Service and Sacramento County. The current owner is a partner in a cooperative water hyacinth control program in which the Refuge actively participates.

Current use: This 103-acre farm is vineyard land with many improvements, including a water delivery system.

Existing habitats and wildlife: The property supports tidal emergent perennial wetlands, open water, and a riparian corridor, including shaded riverine aquatic habitat. The surrounding area already supports resident and migratory wildlife, including many species at risk, such as the Sacramento splittail, Swainson's hawk, giant garter snake, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, western pond turtle, California hibiscus, vernal pool plant species, and many neotropical migratory songbirds.

Potential restoration and management opportunities: This property has a variety of

natural habitats that can be enhanced. It floods in the winter due to overtopping of its levees and has excellent restoration potential for seasonal wetlands, riparian forest, and grasslands. It offers a unique opportunity to remove an existing vineyard and restore natural ecological processes. When combined with the adjacent Service-owned Agriversified property, the resulting 323-acre management unit offers outstanding restoration potential. The property includes a residence and office that could be readily converted into an environmental education center. The Refuge has no public use facilities, so the availability of this facility is a strong asset.

Property #2: \$396,859 agricultural easement (*Packard Foundation providing \$94,300*)

Location: This property is situated to serve as a buffer between properties that pursue wildlife-friendly, non-intensive agricultural practices and the vineyards immediately to the south, where more intensive pesticide use occurs and wildlife use is discouraged. The property is in the upper watershed and upland margins of South Stone Lake and forms an upland transition zone between the lake and surrounding areas.

Current land use: This 148-acre farm is leveled for agriculture. About half of the land is used to raise rye grass, clover, and alfalfa; the other half provides pasture land that is grazed. Two wells and a water delivery system support farming practices. Under terms of the agricultural easement, grazing and cultivation of wildlife-friendly crops will be continued.

Existing habitat and wildlife: The pasture area is subject to frequent winter flooding and has supported large numbers of water-associated birds. Wildlife-friendly crops offer upland nesting cover for waterfowl and foraging sites for long-billed curlews, ibis, and sandhill cranes, and other migrants. An existing five-acre irrigation pond supports some riparian vegetation.

Potential restoration and management opportunities: An agricultural easement will allow continuation of wildlife-friendly farming practices. It will offer opportunities for the Service to partner and cost-share with the land owner to encourage cultivation of wildlife-friendly crops, continue/improve seasonal flooding, plant riparian vegetation, and more. With support from the landowner, the Service can develop education programs that focus on wildlife-friendly farming practices. The landowner has retained the option of developing hunting opportunities.

Property #3: \$538,175 fee title (*Packard Foundation providing \$215,000 and City of Sacramento providing \$170,000*)

Location: This property is located in the upper watershed of South Stone Lake, adjacent to the Service's 50-acre Gallagher property. It is located downstream from a dairy and helps buffer threats to water quality posed by the dairy. It helps convey drainage and runoff, thereby providing flood protection to the adjacent community of Point Pleasant. Its important location will allow the Service to more effectively control invasions by exotic species, notably water hyacinth, which can proliferate in upstream sources, such as dairy runoff.

Current land use: This 110-acre farm supports row crops, pasture for grazing, and fallow grassland. It includes three houses, pumps for water delivery systems, wells, and greenhouses.

Existing habitat and wildlife: This unlevelled land is intersected by natural swales, sloughs with riparian corridors, emergent marsh, and vernal pools. Its uplands offer nesting cover for waterfowl and small mammals, hunting areas for raptors and coyotes, and seasonal habitat for giant garter snakes. Areas subject to intermittent flooding harbor wading birds and shorebirds.

Perennial sloughs and waterways provide aquatic habitat for giant garter snakes, western pond turtles, native fish, river otters, muskrats, and other mammals.

Potential restoration and management opportunities: A 160-acre management unit would result when combined with the Service's adjacent Gallagher property. Jointly managed, the two properties could help restore the historic alignment of Timm's Slough. Existing habitats can be readily enhanced by planting native grasses and riparian species, expanding the emergent marsh, and removing levees to restore seasonal wetlands. The property's greenhouses can be used to grow plants needed for restoration and enhancement activities. A local high school has expressed interest in participating in this horticultural/restoration project.

Property #4: \$383,675 fee title (*full funding needed--handled by Trust for Public Land*)

Location: This 103-acre property, if acquired, would become the southernmost Service-owned property in the approved project area. It is less than 0.5 mile from the McCormack-Williamson Tract and is bisected by Interstate 5.

Current use: The property is maintained as dry pastureland for grazing.

Existing habitats and wildlife: The property includes some permanent wetlands, swales, riparian vegetation, and emergent marsh. It provides foraging habitat for many birds, including sandhill cranes, shorebirds, waterfowl, and raptors.

Potential restoration and management opportunities: Once acquired by TPL, it would be conveyed to the Service to manage. The Service will enhance its native grasslands, improve the riparian corridor, and create vernal pools and other seasonal wetlands. It offers opportunities for enhancement of giant garter snake habitat.

<i>Transaction (prioritized)</i>	<i>Size/ acres</i>	<i>Full Purchase price</i>	<i>Type of transaction</i>	<i>Funding secured/ Source</i>	<i>Amount requested of CALFED</i>	<i>Option signed</i>
<i>Property #1</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>\$2,053,511</i>	<i>fee title</i>	<i>Packard Fdn. \$ 750,000**</i>	<i>\$1,303,511</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Property #2</i>	<i>148</i>	<i>\$ 396,859</i>	<i>agricultural easement</i>	<i>Packard Fdn. \$ 94,300**</i>	<i>\$ 302,559</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Property #3</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>\$ 538,175</i>	<i>fee title</i>	<i>Packard Fdn. \$ 215,000** City of Sac. \$ 170,000</i>	<i>\$ 153,175</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Property #4</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>\$ 383,675</i>	<i>fee title</i>	<i>Other funds being sought TPL to assist*</i>	<i>\$ 383,675</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Water right</i>		<i>\$2,922,110</i>	<i>fee title</i>		<i>\$2,922,110</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Totals</i>	<i>464</i>	<i>\$6,294,330</i>		<i>\$1,229,300</i>	<i>\$5,065,030</i>	<i>No</i>

* Amount to acquire water right is estimated.

Schedule of tasks, deliverables, and phases of project: This project can be divided into five separate tasks, which are listed in priority order in the preceding table.. The funding request made to CALFED is noted.

Schedule for completing tasks on four property acquisitions:

Task/Phase	Property 1 Schedule	Property 2 Schedule	Property 3 Schedule	Property 4 Schedule	Water Rights
Initial contact with landowner	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Appraisal completed	Dec 1998	Nov 1998	Oct 1997	Oct 1997	Feb 1999
Appraisal approved by FWS	Feb 1999	Nov 1998	Mar 1998	Mar 1998	June 1999
Option for purchase agreement	negotiating	April 1999	Oct 1998	Oct 1998	pending
Title search	July 1998	Sept 1997	Oct 1997	Oct 1998	N/A
Survey of property	Sept 1998	April 1999	pending	pending	N/A*
Escrow and closing	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*
Recording of deed	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*
Purchase of property	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*

* N/A = Once options are signed and funding is secured, it will take approximately ??months to complete escrow, record deed, and finalize the purchase.

Location and/or Geographic Boundaries of Project

The four properties encompass 464 acres within Stone Lake NWR's approved project boundary in Sacramento County. They are strategically located within the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta (North Delta Corridor) and the Cosumnes/Mokelumne Rivers Basin. Three of the four properties are adjacent to land that is already owned, managed, or will be managed as part of Stone Lakes NWR. The water right acquisitions lie on the eastern edge of Yolo County within the Delta. They include an annual appropriation of approximately 4,000 acre-feet of water from the Sacramento River. (See maps Appendix A and B.)

ECOLOGICAL/BIOLOGICAL BENEFITS

Ecological/Biological Objectives:

Primary ecological/biological objectives/need for the project: The primary purpose of this proposal is to protect and restore habitat on the four key properties within the Stone Lakes NWR approved boundary and to purchase the water rights for the benefit of fish and wildlife for the benefit of fish and wildlife, such as:

- Protect agricultural land and habitat in the core of the Refuge project area, where large developments are rapidly converting open space and farmland.
- Contribute to Stone Lakes NWR goals by protecting, restoring, and expanding tidal and seasonal wetlands, lakes, riparian corridors, and upland habitats to benefit fish and wildlife.
- Protect, restore, and expand portions of South Stone Lake and its associated tidal and seasonal wetlands, riparian corridors, and perennial grasslands. This will help restore the historical configuration of South Stone Lake and increase flood storage capacity.
- Restore an existing vineyard (Property #1) to natural features, which will substantially improve habitat and wildlife values on this property.
- Protect three properties that are adjacent to properties currently owned or managed by the Refuge; this connectivity enhances the value of the Stone Lake/Cosumnes Basin.
- Allow expansion of the Refuge's water hyacinth control efforts. The Service is part of a local water hyacinth control group that is making substantial progress in reducing or eliminating water hyacinth within the basin.
- Enhance the Refuge's ability to maintain restored wetlands, other habitats, and wildlife-friendly farming operations through the water made available through water rights acquisition.
- Complement CALFED mission of restoring ecological health in the northern Delta. Address elements of four of six of the strategic goals listed as 1999 CALFED funding priorities. Address several CALFED topic areas and CALFED objectives of providing good water quality for beneficial uses, improving/increasing aquatic and terrestrial habitats, and improving ecological functions in the Bay-Delta.

Alternative approaches considered: When meeting with prospective sellers, the Service provides information on a range of options for protecting land, including easements, partnering agreements, technical assistance, grant programs, and fee title acquisition. The goal of Service policy is to protect lands with the least intrusive approach and partner with other agencies or entities, as appropriate. The four property owners considered these options and chose the type of transaction they preferred. Three of the four chose fee title acquisition, which offers the highest level of protection. The fourth chose an agricultural easement. In the case of the water right acquisition, the Service was approached by Delta Sugar Corporation, which wishes to sell ownership of their water right, pursue transferring the point of diversion from the Sacramento River to the Stone Lakes Basin, and change the purpose of water use from industrial to habitat management.

Ecological process, habitats, species, and primary stressors:

Ecological Process Visions: Hydrology and Hydraulics

Central Valley Streamflows: ...protect and enhance the ecological functions that are achieved through the physical and biological processes....[*Opportunities may include acquiring water rights from willing sellers...*](Vol. 1, p. 48-56).

Channel Forming Processes

Natural Floodplains and Flood Processes:...maintain or restore the processes that sustain them by conserving existing intact floodplains modifying or removing barriers...(Vol. 1, p. 83).

Cycling and Transport of Nutrients, Detritus and Organisms

Bay-Delta Aquatic Foodweb:...restore primary and secondary production to levels...[*increasing shallow water habitat and tidal wetlands in the Bay and Delta...*](Vol. 1, p. 95-101).

Vision for Reducing or Eliminating Primary Stressors: Levees, Bridges, and Bank Protection

Restoration following acquisition will reestablish frequent inundation of the properties of the Stone Lakes floodplain by breaching levees either on the property or adjacent properties (Vol. 1, p. 435, vol. 2, p. 80).

Invasive Aquatic Plants

Management of the properties will include control efforts on those species such as water hyacinth where control is most feasible and of greatest benefit (Vol. 1, p. 451, Vol. 2, p. 81).

Invasive Riparian and Marsh Plants

Management of properties will include control efforts on those species such as *Arundo*, and perennial pepperweed (Vol. 1, p. 470, Vol. 2, p. 81). Also water hyacinth and star thistle.

Fish and Wildlife Harvest

Management of properties will enhance populations of waterfowl for harvest by hunting and for non-consumptive recreation including environmental education and interpretation, wildlife observation and photography (Vol. 1, p. 510, Vol. 2, p. 81).

Disturbance

Management of the properties will include law enforcement activities to reduce human activities that adversely affect wildlife behavior....(Vol. 1, p. 532, Vol. 2, p. 81).

Additional stressors include conversions of agricultural lands to vineyards, poor water quality, agricultural practices (Vol. 2, p. 54).

Species - Priority Group I - Splittail (Vol. 1, p. 207, Vol. 2, p. 82)

Species - Priority Group II - Swainson's hawk (Vol. 1, p. 250, Vol. 2, p. 84) vernal pool plant species (Vol 1., p. 279 , Vol. 2 p. 85) and valley elderberry longhorn beetle (Vol. 1 p .286 , Vol. 2 p. 85)

Species - Priority Group III - Sacramento perch, greater sandhill crane, western yellow-billed cuckoo, bank swallow, western least bittern, least Bell's vireo, little willow flycatcher, giant garter

snake, California tiger salamander, western spadefoot toad, native anuran amphibians, western pond turtle (Vol. 1, pages 297-334, Vol. 2, pages 83-85)

Species - Priority Group IV- Native resident fish species, Bay-Delta aquatic foodweb organisms, shorebird and wading bird guild, migratory waterfowl, neotropical migratory bird guild, upland game, plant community groups (aquatic habitat plant community, seasonal wetland habitat plant community)(vol. 1, pages 345-383).

Species - Strategic Goal 3: Striped bass, American shad, non-native warmwater gamefish (Vol. 1, pages 395, 404, 408).

Habitats - The acquisition of these properties would meet the following strategic objectives for habitats (Vol. 1, p. 103):

#1. Restore large expanses of all major habitat types in the Delta.....

#2. Restore large expanses of all aquatic, wetland and riparian habitats in the Central Valley and its rivers.

#4. Halt as much as is possible the conversion of agricultural land to urban and suburban uses.....

The following habitats as described in the subobjectives will be protected and/or restored:

Tidal perennial aquatic habitat:(Vol. 1, p. 111, Vol. 2, p. 79).

Fresh emergent wetland: (Vol. 1, p. 136, Vol. 2, p. 80)

Seasonal wetland: (Vol. 1, p. 141, Vol. 2, p. 80)

Riparian and riverine aquatic habitats: (Vol. 1, p. 147, Vol. 2, p. 80)

Freshwater fish habitats: (vol. 1, p. 155, vol. 2, p. 80)

Perennial grassland: (Vol. 1, p. 168, Vol. 2, p. 80)

Agricultural lands: (Vol. 1, p. 172, Vol. 2, p. 80)

Primary Benefits: Acquisition and subsequent restoration of the properties and water rights will restore tidal and seasonal wetlands and riparian forest in portions of the historic floodplain of South Stone Lake. Restored fresh emergent wetland (tidal) would encompass approximately 30 acres; seasonal wetlands would encompass approximately 90 acres. Riparian forests would cover about 30 acres along existing sloughs and transition to wet meadow/perennial grasslands on about 273 acres.

These habitats will provide nesting and foraging habitat for a variety of wetland-dependent birds including the Aleutian Canada goose, sandhill crane, western least bittern; many neotropical migrants, including the western yellow-billed cuckoo, bank swallow, least Bell's vireo, little willow flycatcher; and other species of interest such as Swainson's hawk, giant garter snake, California tiger salamander, western spadefoot toad, native anuran amphibians, and western pond turtle. Various surveys will be used to quantify expected increases in use by selected species, such as weekly waterbird surveys during the migration and winter.

Riparian restorations will also improve habitat for aquatic priority species, such as the Delta smelt and Sacramento splittail.

Acquisition by the Service and restoration of seasonal wetlands and perennial grasslands would preclude any future conversion to more intensive uses, such as urban development, vineyards, or other undesirable land uses within the Stone Lakes Basin. The restoration effort would serve as a model for restoring a vineyard back to seasonal wetlands, riparian habitat, and grasslands.

Secondary benefits: Riparian systems act as water filters in the floodplain and provide groundwater recharge, bank stabilization, water pollution purification and erosion control.

Summary of basis for expected benefits and their durability: The Service has 516 units in the National Wildlife Refuge System. Unlike many other agencies which protect land, the Service also commits personnel and funds toward operation and management of these refuge units *in perpetuity*. This has already occurred at Stone Lakes NWR, where four previously purchased properties have been or are being restored and managed with significant, measurable increases in a broad range of wildlife populations. This proposal supports regional planning efforts, such as the Sacramento County General Plan and the South County HCP.

Benefits to third parties and other ecosystem restoration programs: Local communities will benefit from the increased opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation and environmental education. Property #2 will offer opportunities to demonstrate wildlife-friendly farming practices in action. National wildlife refuges offer documented economic benefits to businesses in the communities of which they are part through visitor patronage of local services. Restoration of wetlands and other aquatic habitats in and around South Stone Lake will improve overall habitat conditions and ecological functions of the Delta and support many landscape-based programs, such as the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture and the Riparian Habitat Joint Venture. The project, as part of the Stone Lakes NWR, will serve as a model for restoration efforts and offer numerous public outreach opportunities.

Project will be self-sustaining: If the acquisitions are fully funded through CALFED, the proposed purchases can be made and no other funds will be needed to complete the transactions.

Project implements an ecosystem-based approach/uses adaptive management: As lands are protected by the Service, every effort is made to manage new units as part of ecosystems present within the Stone Lakes/Cosumnes Basin specifically, and the Delta, in general. These four properties, when added to those already owned or managed by the Service, offer an important opportunity to create landscape linkages managed by common principles. Refuge lands are adaptively managed, in that current monitoring efforts yield observations and data that provide the basis for fine tuning and adjusting management prescriptions.

Scientific question to be evaluated: This proposal is based on the hypothesis that *breaching levees*, controlling *invasive aquatic plants*, improving and expanding habitat for fish and waterfowl for *fish and wildlife harvest* and reducing *disturbance* in the Stone Lakes Basin will contribute to the improvement of ecological functions in the Bay Delta system by supporting sustainable populations of wetland dependent plants, wildlife and fish. These species include but

not limited to Sacramento splittail, Delta smelt, Swainson's hawk, sandhill crane, shore and wading birds, neotropical migratory birds, and the giant garter snake.

Linkages

Linkages to projects: All of the proposed acquisitions lie within the Stone Lakes NWR approved project boundary -- which is located within the Delta and adjacent to the Yolo Basin and the Cosumnes River Preserve. Three of the four property acquisitions are adjacent to Refuge-managed lands. One of these properties is the Kuhn Ranch, for which acquisition funds have been provided by CALFED. Other properties on the Refuge have received \$2.64 million in acquisition or restoration funds from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Caltrans Environmental Enhancement Mitigation Fund, California Environmental License Plate Fund, and many other funds or programs. The acquisition of water rights will help provide water for wetlands, riparian areas, and other aquatic habitats throughout the Refuge's approved project area, both now and in the future. These aquatic habitats will provide linkages with other Central Valley wetlands that are the focus of many programs, such as the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture, Riparian Habitat Joint Venture, Anadromous Fisheries Recovery Program, and others.

Linkage to other ERP actions/goals: The funding of this proposal will assist CALFED in attaining the long term mission of the program to restore the ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta system.

ERP strategic objective and target (s) project addresses: Protection of these four properties and acquisition of Delta water rights will enable habitat restoration and enhancement on Stone Lakes NWR that will satisfy several CALFED objectives and targets.

Goal 1: Threatened and endangered species: Achieve recovery of at-risk species dependent on the Delta... (ERP p. 28)

Goal 2: Ecosystem processes and biotic communities: Rehabilitate natural processes in the Bay-Delta estuary and its watershed...(ERP p. 29)

Objective 1: Bay-Delta hydraulics (Vol. 1, p. 91)

Target 1: Reestablish more natural internal Delta water flow...(Vol. 2, p. 93)

Objective 2: Bay-Delta aquatic foodweb (Vol. 1, p. 95)

Target 1: Increase primary and secondary nutrient productivity...(Vol.2, p. 95)

Objective 6: Natural floodplains and flood processes (Vol. 1, p. 83)

Target 1: Expand the floodplain area in the North Delta Ecological Management Unit(s).....(Vol. 2, p. 91)

Goal 4: Habitats: Protect or restore functional habitat types...(ERP p. 30)

Objective 1: Restore large expanses of all major habitat types in Delta...(Vol. 1, p. 103)

Objective 2: Restore large expanses of all aquatic, wetland, and riparian habitats..

Objective 4: halt as much as is possible the conversion of agricultural land....

Subobjective: Tidal perennial aquatic habitat (Vol. 1, p. 111)

Target 1: Restore 1,500 acres of shallow-water habitat in the North Delta

Ecological Management Unit.... (Vol.2, p. 96)

Subobjective: Fresh emergent wetland (Tidal) (Vol.1 p. 136)

Target 1: Increase existing tidal freshwater marsh habitat in the Delta by restoring 30,000-45,000 acres of lands...(Vol. 2, p. 99)

Subobjective: Seasonal wetland habitat (Vol. 1, p.141)

Target 1: Restore and manage at least 4,000 acres of additional seasonal wetland habitat.....North Delta Ecological Management Unit (Vol. 2, p.101)

Subobjective: Riparian and riverine aquatic habitats (Vol. 1, p. 147)

Target 5: Restore 10 to 20 linear miles of riparian and riverine aquatic habitat in the North Delta Ecological Management Unit (Vol. 2, p. 103)

Subobjective: Freshwater fish habitat and essential fish habitat (Vol. 1, p. 155)

Target 1: Maintain and improve existing freshwater fish habitat and essential fish habitat through integration of actions...(Vol. 2, p. 104)

Subobjective: Perennial grassland (Vol. 1, p.168)

Target 1: Restore 4,000 to 6,000 acres of perennial grasses in the North...Delta Ecological Management Unit(s)....(Vol. 2, p. 105)

Subobjective: Agricultural lands (Vol. 1, p. 172)

Target 1: Cooperatively manage 40,000 to 75,000 acres of agricultural lands. (Vol. 2, p. 106)

Goal 3 (Stressors): Levees, bridges and bank protection (Vol. 1, p. 435)

Target 1: Increase shoreline and floodplain riparian habitat in the Delta...(Vol. 2, p. 110)

(Stressors:) Invasive Aquatic Plants (Vol. 1 p. 451, Vol. 2. p 81)

Target 1: Manage existing and restored deadend and (Vol. 2. p. 111)

(Stressors:) Invasive Riparian and Salt Marsh Plants (Vol. 1 p 470, Vol. 2 p. 81)

Target 1: Reduce surface area covered by non-invasive plants... (Vol. 2 p. 112)

(Stressors:) Fish and Wildlife Harvest (Vol. 1 p 510, Vol. 2 p.81)

Target 1: Reduce illegal harvest... by increasing enforcement (Vol. 2, p. 114)

Project supports CALFED objectives: As indicated, protection of these lands and their subsequent restoration and purchase of the water rights will assist CALFED in achieving several of its short and long term objectives as outlined in the Strategic Plan for Ecosystem Restoration.

Proposal relates to legal FWS mandates: These acquisitions will be managed as part of Stone Lakes NWR. The purpose of the Refuge is to restore and protect a native diversity of fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats. The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.

System-Wide Ecosystem Benefits

Ecosystem benefits/other programs within the area: Stone Lakes NWR and the Stone Lakes/Cosumnes Basin is in the heart of the CALFED's North Delta Corridor. Agricultural lands and open space are being lost to urban expansion and conversion to vineyards at a rapid rate, eliminating critical habitat for scores of imperilled species. Land protection and restoration efforts within the refuge project boundary complement and enhance region wide efforts to preserve and restore landscape corridors. The acquisition of Property 1 will directly link with the Refuge's Kuhn Ranch acquisition proposal previously funded by CALFED. The acquisition of Property 4 will provide an important link between Stone Lakes NWR and the Cosumnes River Preserve through CALFED's recent support of the McCormack-Williamson Tract acquisition. The proposed water right acquisition is just a few miles west of the Refuge and north of Liberty Island, another CALFED-funded project. The proposed acquisitions will complement or link to regional flood control plans, Sacramento County General Plan, South County HCP, Stone Lakes Basin Water Hyacinth Control Program, Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture, Riparian Habitat Joint Venture, and management programs at the nearby Yolo Basin Wildlife Area and Cosumnes River Preserve.

Compatibility with Non-Ecosystem Objectives

This project is compatible with CALFED's water management objectives, including water quality, water supply reliability, levee system integrity. It complements CALFED programs related to water use efficiency, water transfers, and watershed management.

Third party benefits: Local communities will benefit from the increased opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation and environmental education. Studies have documented that visitors to national wildlife refuges patronize local services, support local businesses, and boost the local economy. Restoration of wetlands and other aquatic habitats in and around South Stone Lake will improve overall habitat conditions and ecological functions of the Delta. The project, as part of the Stone Lakes NWR, will serve as a model for restoration efforts and offer numerous public outreach opportunities.

Technical Feasibility and Timing

Timing: As described in the scope of work, all of the preliminary work for these acquisitions has been completed; options have been signed for two properties and the other options are being negotiated now. It will take just a few months to complete escrow, recording of the deed, and other paperwork, once full funding is made available.

Other alternatives: As previously mentioned, the Service offers potential sellers a suite of alternatives for protecting or restoring land. These alternatives were offered to each of the landowners, who have expressed wishes to sell in fee title or as an agricultural easement.

Environmental compliance documents: NEPA requirements for the acquisition of property have been fulfilled under the Stone Lakes NWR FEIS (1992). Additional tiered NEPA compliance may be required for acquiring water rights. Subsequent habitat restoration and enhancement may require preparation of the following documents/permits: NEPA (Categorical Exclusion) and CEQA documentation; Clean Water Act/Section 404 permit; Endangered Species Act/Section 7 consultation; Streambed Alteration permits; National Historic Preservation Act (Section 106) compliance; and Regional Water Quality Control Board Certification.

Monitoring and Data Collection Methodology

This proposal requests funding for acquisition of property and water rights. Acquisitions will be tracked using the USFWS realty tracking system. Restoration, monitoring and data collection methods will be developed in subsequent phases of the project.

Upon acquisition, existing habitats will be thoroughly inventoried; plant communities will be documented, including invasive plant species. Wildlife will also be inventoried to establish baseline information. The results of these inventories will drive the development of a restoration plan and long-term data collection and monitoring methodologies. Restoration and monitoring will be performed in later phases of this project.

Biological/Ecological Objectives: The following table describes the types of hypotheses to be tested, the monitoring parameters, and the data evaluation approach that will be considered *after these properties and the water right are acquired*:

Biological/Ecological Objectives			
Hypothesis to be Evaluated	Monitoring Parameters and Data Collection Approach	Data Evaluation Approach	Comments/ Data Priority
Reducing stressors: <i>breaching levees</i>	Waterfowl and waterbird surveys	Evaluation of trends of survey data	Staff will conduct surveys/high
controlling <i>invasive aquatic plants (water hyacinth)</i>	Ground monitoring and aerial evaluations	Qualitative evaluation	Staff will conduct surveys/high
Improving and expanding habitat for fish and waterfowl for <i>fish and wildlife harvest</i>	Waterfowl and waterbird surveys. Fish surveys in South Stone Lake	Evaluation of trends of survey data	Staff /high
Reducing <i>disturbance</i> in the Stone Lakes basin	Monitoring of disturbance by law enforcement personnel	Number of citations issued	Staff/high

Local Involvement

County and Delta Protection Commission notified: Letters have been sent to Don Nottoli, Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, Mike McGowan, Yolo County Board of Supervisors, and the Delta Protection Commission, as outlined in the proposal guidelines (See letters, Appendix C). It should be noted that the Service has an ongoing relationship with these entities and frequently communicates with and briefs them on timely issues.

Groups contacted/level of support The Service is currently working with the following agencies, which support the goals of Stone Lakes NWR, to coordinate activities on and near the Refuge: Cosumnes River Preserve, Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks, Recreation, and Open Space, Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District, California Department of Parks and Recreation, California Department of Transportation, and the California Department of Water Resources. These acquisitions and subsequent restorations will contribute to the goals of many Federal, State, and local programs and plans. They will also support and enhance ongoing community public outreach and environmental education programs.

In addition, the following agencies and organizations, which are located in Sacramento or have field representatives in the area, support the Service's land protection program at Stone Lakes NWR: Sacramento Open Space, Sacramento Open Space Conservancy, Elk Grove School District, Elk Grove Community Services District, Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge Association, California Waterfowl Association, Ducks Unlimited, National Audubon Society/California Office, The Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Land, The Resources Agency, California Department of Fish and Game, Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture, Riparian Habitat Joint Venture, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. The Refuge has won strong support from many legislators, including Senator Boxer, Senator Feinstein, Congressman Matsui, former Congressman Fazio, many state legislators, and local officials. (See letters of support, Appendix D.)

Individuals contacted: Each year the Sacramento Realty Office sends out at least one letter sharing information about current land protection efforts within Stone Lakes NWR and inviting property owners to contact the Service for information regarding the Refuge's land protection program. All landowners, including individuals, agencies, or others, have received these letters.

Some opposition to establishing Stone Lakes NWR was expressed early in the Refuge planning process by the Building Industry Association, Farm Bureau, North Delta Conservancy, some private landowners, and a few elected officials. At least one federal representative has opposed providing Congressionally-appropriated funds to the Refuge for land acquisition purposes. In recent years, following focused outreach efforts by Supervisor Don Nottoli, Sacramento Regional County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Director Ron Suter (and former Director Gene Andal), and the Refuge staff, much of this opposition has diffused. Evidence of this evolution is the recent County Board of Supervisors' approval of a cooperative management agreement with the Service to manage its 1,500-acre North Stone Lake property as a unit of the Refuge.

Outreach plan: Due to the partnership nature of managing Stone Lakes NWR, Refuge partners and supporters are routinely briefed on land protection and restoration efforts. Briefings occur in one-on-one meetings, group meetings, or by mailing. For example, when considering initiation of a grazing program on the North Stone Lake property, several of these groups and individuals were invited to attend meetings or otherwise give input. In order to inform environmental groups, refuge neighbors, and the general public the Service sent out news releases to more than 100 groups and individuals. In addition to continuing to use these outreach methods, the Refuge staff intends to initiate a newsletter for landowners which focuses on timely issues such as water hyacinth control, acquisition opportunities, restoration, and more.

Third party impacts: The Service works only with willing sellers and the public was provided numerous opportunities to provide input during the development of the FEIS for creation of the Stone Lakes NWR. Anticipated third party impacts to the local tax base by withdrawal of private lands would be off-set through annual payments to Sacramento County in lieu of taxes pursuant to the Refuge Revenue Sharing Act.

Cost

Budget:

Property description	Appraisal title policy	Survey	Relocation costs	Direct salary & labor	Other overhead	Approved appraisal	Total Costs
Property #1	\$22,700	\$3000	\$200,000	\$8,000	\$59,811	\$1,760,000	\$2,053,511
Property #2	\$8,500	\$3,000	none	\$8,000	\$11,559	\$ 365,800	\$396,859
Property #3	\$6,500	\$3,000	\$75,000	\$8,000	\$15,675	\$430,000	\$538,175
Property #4	\$6,500	\$3,000	none	\$8,000	\$11,175	\$355,000	\$383,675
Water right*	\$15,000	none	none	\$22,000	\$85,110	\$2,800,000*	\$2,922,110
TOTAL	\$59,200	12,000	\$275,000	\$54,000	\$183,330	\$5,710,800	\$6,294,330

*Amount for acquisition of water rights is estimated at \$2,800,000.

Note: CALFED IS BEING REQUESTED TO PROVIDE \$5,065,030 (See page 8)

Schedule: (See table on page 9)

Cost Sharing

Cost sharing: As indicated on the budget table in the previous section, the Packard Foundation has approved \$1,059,300 to be used toward funding of properties 1-3. The City of Sacramento will provide \$170,000 toward acquisition of Property #3. These funds will be received and managed by the Trust for Public Land, which has already received forms for requesting the promised funding.

Basis for CALFED funding: These acquisitions are located in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and the Cosumnes/Mokelumne Rivers floodplain. Protection of this habitat through acquisition will meet several CALFED objectives and is consistent with CALFED's ERPP for several species. Acquisition of these properties will provide ideal shallow, tidal habitat for Delta smelt and Sacramento splittail -- values that can be enhanced through restoration. South Stone Lake, Snodgrass Slough, and other perennial water sources can offer potential reintroduction sites for Sacramento perch. Both properties also offer existing wetland, riparian forest, and grassland habitats vital to migratory birds. These benefits can be considerably expanded with enhancement and restoration efforts.

It should be noted that within the coming months, fee title interest in two other properties will be transferred to the Refuge by the California Department of Transportation (150 acres-Beach Lake Mitigation Bank) and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (1,224 acres-North Stone Lake). In addition to the Packard Foundation grant, these lands should be considered as a matching contribution for this CALFED funding request.

Applicant Qualifications

Sacramento Realty Office: The Service currently manages over 670 square miles of habitat within the National Wildlife Refuge System in California. The Service has an ongoing land acquisition program that covers 16 refuges and wildlife management areas within the Central Valley and San Francisco Bay Area. The Sacramento Realty Office's staff of eight has over 150 years of combined experience in the areas of reality, appraisal, and environmental protection. The Sacramento Realty Office, led by Chief Howard K. Stark, will coordinate acquisition of these properties.

Biosketch: Mr. Howard K. Stark

- Multi-disciplinary qualifications as Supervisory Realty Specialist, Appraiser, Facilities Master Plans Officer, Environmental Planner.
- Over 10 years of broad-based management experience in real estate, land use planning, and environmental compliance fields with four federal agencies.
- Track record of success in managing complex projects involving high expenditures of public funds on controversial programs.
- Adept in applying negotiation skills and problem solving techniques to resolve conflicts and to achieve optimum program success.
- Initiated the \$12 billion Santa Anna River Flood Control Project and managed the \$6 million annual military recruiting station leasing program in Southern California as the Land Acquisition manager for the Army Corps of Engineers.
- Currently manages a Federal land acquisition program ranging from \$7-\$40 million annually with a \$672,000 annual operating budget. The office has responsibility for the Service's realty program in the Central Valley and San Francisco Bay Area. In fiscal years 96/97 the office acquired 21.38 square miles of habitat in fee and conservation easements within California.

Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge Staff: Once these properties are acquired, the Stone Lakes NWR staff will coordinate restoration work with various cooperators including Ducks Unlimited, which has a long-established track record in accomplishing restoration projects. The staff, led by Project Leader Thomas E. Harvey, is currently managing nearly 1,000 acres of Service-owned land within the Refuge project area and 2,750 acres of land owned by other agencies.

To date, the Service has expended a total of \$4.3 million of Federal, State, and private funds to acquire lands from four willing sellers and has obtained over \$2.64 million for the restoration, enhancement, and management of 1,300 acres on the Refuge. The Service is uniquely qualified to identify, acquire and manage these lands in perpetuity. Certain portions of the work may be contracted, depending upon priorities and existing work loads. There are no known conflicts of interest with parties involved in this project.

Biosketch: Mr. Thomas E. Harvey

- Has 16 years of experience with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

- Served in the capacities of refuge manager and/or biologist at three National Wildlife Refuges: Don Edwards San Francisco Bay NWR, Hawaiian and Pacific Islands NWR, and Stone Lakes NWR.
- Has played a key role at Stone Lakes NWR in the acquisition and restoration of a number of vital refuge properties and has helped direct the development of innovative partnerships with local, State, and Federal agencies, and private organizations.
- Served for three years with the Service's Sacramento Ecological Services Field Office, where he gained first-hand knowledge of numerous issues affecting the biological resources of the Central Valley and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.
- Has working expertise with the procedures and challenges involved in planning new refuge units, protecting significant acreages of land through acquisition, and performing management and habitat improvements on newly-acquired properties.

Trust for Public Land (TPL): This national, non-profit conservation organization has assisted landowners, public agencies, land trusts, and others with the acquisition of thousands of acres of land to protect habitat and open space for more than 25 years. TPL will assist in this project by: 1) purchasing willing seller option agreements or 2) purchasing and holding properties until sufficient funding is available for its acquisition by the Service. It will also help by pursuing other sources of funding to leverage a grant received from CALFED. Through these services, TPL will provide in-kind contributions, including costs related to the land acquisition transactions and staff time. The Service is being assisted by Mr. Mike Reeves, Field Representative, who has completed several land conservation transactions as part of TPL's Rivers Program.

Biosketch: Mr. Mike Reeves

Mike Reeves has four years of land conservation experience at TPL. As a Field Representative for the Western Rivers Program, Mr. Reeves has coordinated multi-county land exchanges with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, resulting in the conservation of several miles of riverine habitat along the Upper Sacramento River and tributaries. Mr. Reeves has several years prior experience in regional planning with the San Diego Association of Governments, the Association of Bay Area Governments, and the Sierra Economic Development District, including riparian habitat conservation and regional river parkway planning. Mr. Reeves has a B.A. in Urban Studies & Planning from UC San Diego and is an M.C.P. candidate in City and Regional Planning from UC Berkeley.

Compliance with Standard Terms and Conditions

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as federal agency acting as a representative of the public, agrees to adhere to all standard terms and conditions identified and applicable to the type of project (real estate transaction) being proposed.

Appendices

Appendix A: Map of proposed acquisitions and restoration

Appendix B: Map of Stone Lakes NWR

Appendix C: Letters of Notification:

Delta Protection Commission

Don Nottoli, Sacramento County Supervisor

Mike McGowan, Yolo County Supervisor

Appendix D: Letters of Support

Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture

County of Sacramento/Dept. of Regional Parks, Recreation & Open Space

National Audubon Society/California

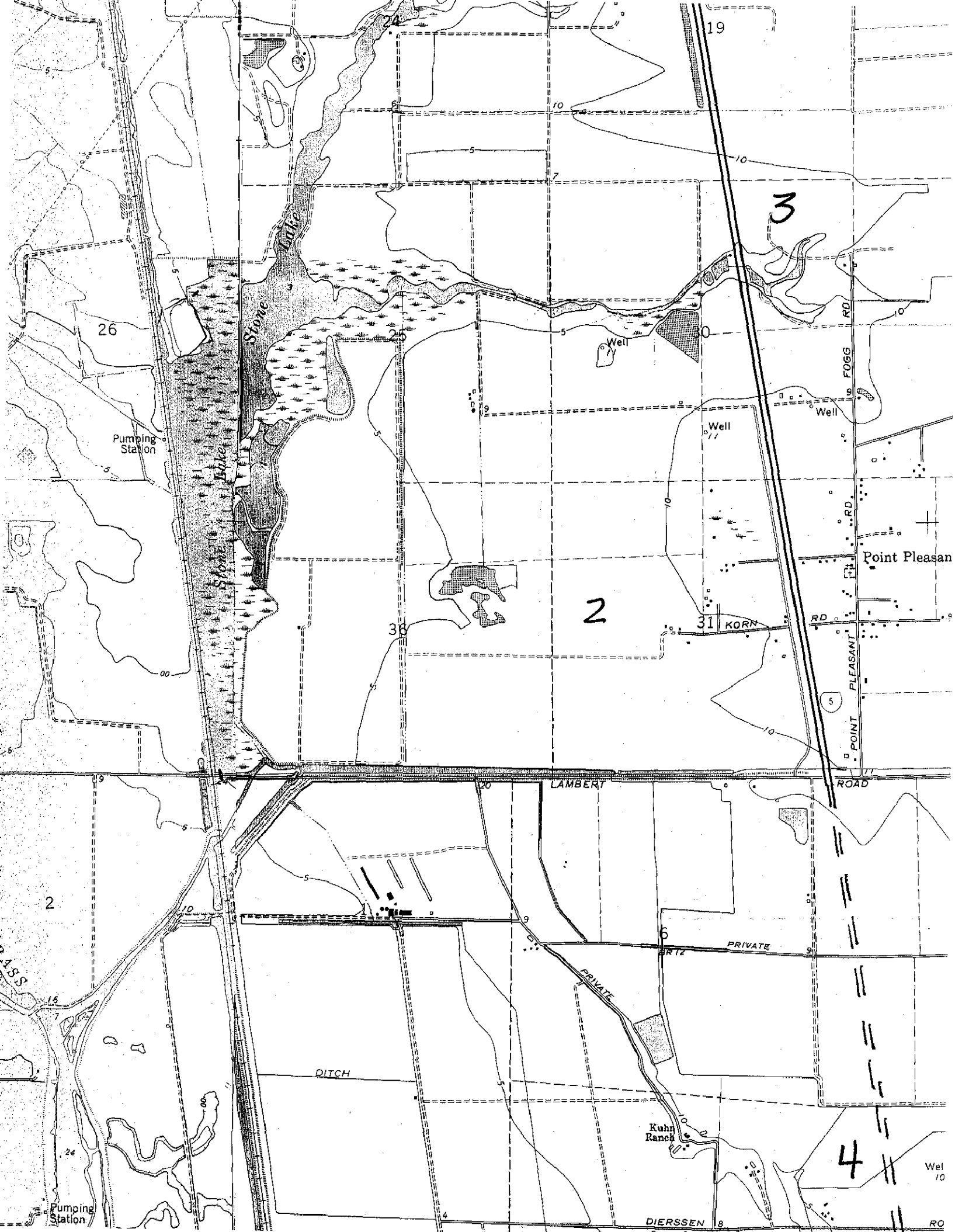
The Trust for Public Land

Sacramento Open Space

Sacramento Open Space Conservancy

Sierra Club

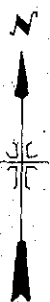
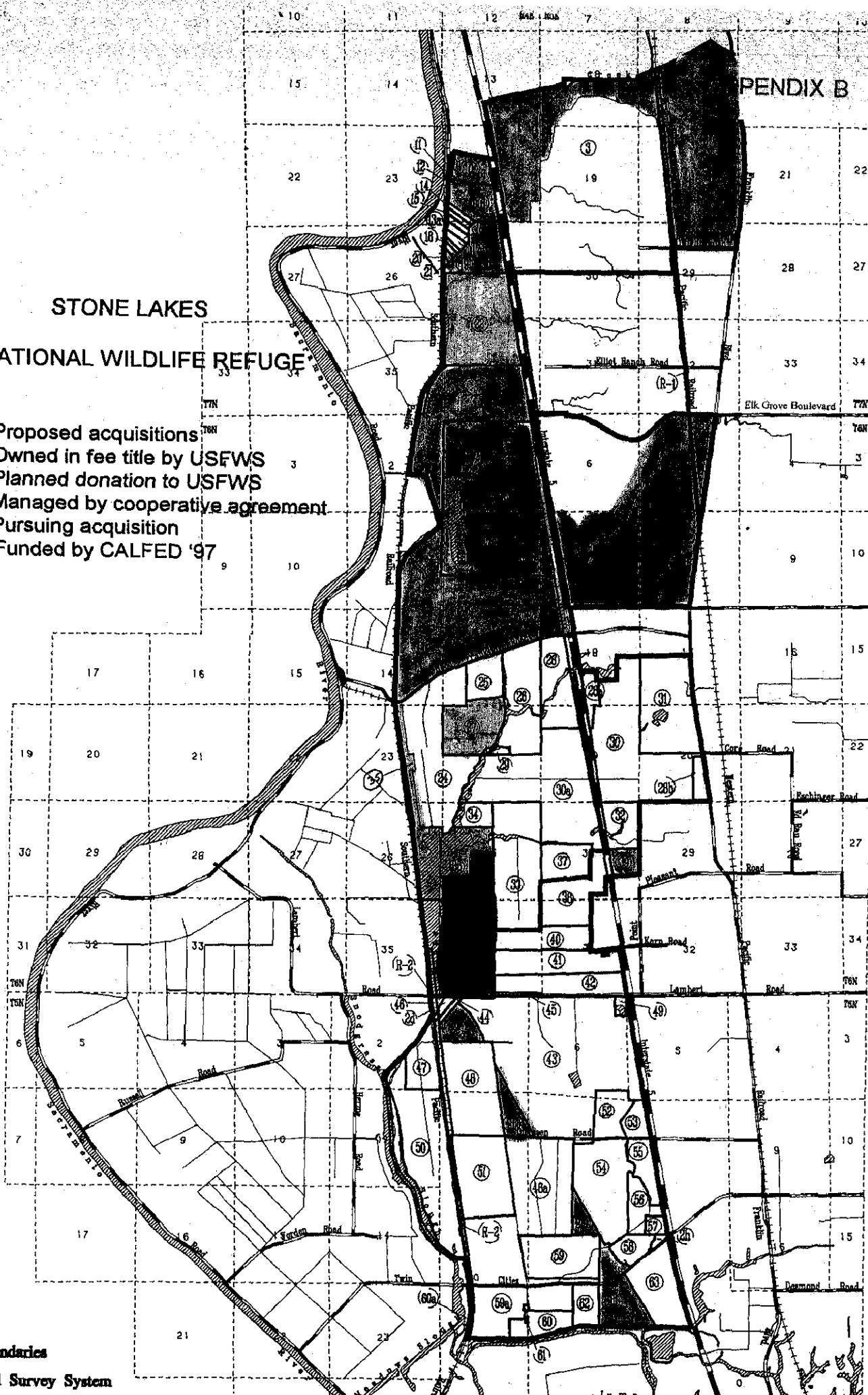
Stone Lakes Refuge Alliance



1 - 0 1 6 3 4 6

STONE LAKES NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

- Proposed acquisitions
 - Owned in fee title by USFWS
 - Planned donation to USFWS
 - Managed by cooperative agreement
 - Pursuing acquisition
- Funded by CALFED '97



Scale 1:62,500

- Project Boundaries
- Public Land Survey System

Appendix C: Letters of Notification:

Delta Protection Commission

Don Nottoli, Sacramento County Supervisor

Mike McGowan, Yolo County Supervisor



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge

2233 Watt Avenue, Suite 230

Sacramento, CA 95825

916/979-2085

April 8, 1999

Delta Protection Commission
14215 River Road
PO Box 530
Walnut Grove, CA 95690

To Whom It May Concern:

In an effort to advance our land protection program at Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and the proposed North Delta National Wildlife Refuge, we are applying for two grants from CALFED. To comply with CALFED notification requirements, we are providing you with written notification of our plans.

For Stone Lakes NWR, the grant application to CALFED asks for funds to 1) complete full funding toward acquisition of three properties within the approved refuge project area (balance of funds provided by Packard Foundation); 2) provide full funding to Trust for Public Land to acquire a fourth property within the refuge project area on our behalf; and 3) acquire Sacramento River water rights owned by Delta Sugar Corporation near Clarksburg, which is in Yolo County.

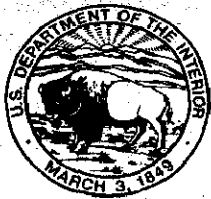
For the proposed North Delta NWR, we are asking for approximately \$2.25 million to 1) acquire property on Liberty Island from willing sellers; 2) fund the restoration planning process; and 3) begin restoration on Liberty Island.

It is our policy to work only with willing sellers and to offer them a variety of options to consider, ranging from partnering and technical assistance to easements and fee title purchase. Offers are based on fair market value of the property. Three of the parties wish to sell in fee title to the Service; the fourth prefers an agricultural easement. Options have been signed on two of the properties and a third is being negotiated now.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

Thomas E. Harvey
Project Leader



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge
2233 Watt Avenue, Suite 230
Sacramento, CA 95825
916/979-2085

April 8, 1999

Don Nottoli, Supervisor
Sacramento County
700 H. Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Don:

In an effort to advance our land protection program at Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), we are applying for a grant from CALFED to partially match an acquisition grant we have received from the David and Lucille Packard Foundation. You and I talk often about Stone Lakes NWR acquisitions and other projects. To comply with CALFED notification requirements, I am writing you to be sure that you know about our plans.

The grant application to CALFED asks for funds to 1) complete full funding toward acquisition of three properties within the approved refuge project area (balance of funds provided by Packard Foundation) and 2) provide full funding to Trust for Public Land to acquire a fourth property within the refuge project area on our behalf. Some of these funds will also be used to acquire Sacramento River water rights owned by Delta Sugar Corporation near Clarksburg, which is in Yolo County.

As you know we work only with willing sellers and offer them a variety of options to consider, ranging from partnering and technical assistance to easements and fee title purchase. Three of the parties wish to sell in fee title to the Service; the fourth prefers an agricultural easement. Options have been signed on two of the properties and a third is being negotiated now.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

Thomas E. Harvey
Project Leader



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge

2233 Watt Avenue, Suite 230

Sacramento, CA 95825

916/979-2085

April 15, 1999

Mike McGowan
Yolo County Supervisor
625 Court Street, Room 204
Woodland, CA 95695

Dear Mr. McGowan:

Recently, we learned that your district includes a project for which we are requesting CALFED funds. We'd like to notify you that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is applying for a CALFED grant to assist with land protection and other acquisition efforts within Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge.

Specifically, the Service is working with Delta Sugar Corporation in Clarksburg (Yolo County) and other diverters to acquire water rights from the Delta. We intend to use this water for the benefit of fish and wildlife and to support wildlife-friendly farming practices within the Refuge boundary.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

Thomas E. Harvey
Project Leader

Appendix D: Letters of Support

Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture

County of Sacramento/Dept. of Regional Parks, Recreation & Open Space

National Audubon Society/California

The Trust for Public Land

Sacramento Open Space

Sacramento Open Space Conservancy

Sierra Club

Stone Lakes Refuge Alliance



CENTRAL VALLEY HABITAT JOINT VENTURE

North American Waterfowl Management Plan

April 12, 1999

American
Farmland Trust
California Waterfowl
Association
Ducks Unlimited
National Audubon
Society
The Nature Conservancy
The Trust for Public Land

Mr. Lester Snow
CALFED Bay-Delta Program Office
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Snow:

This letter acknowledges the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture's strong support for the Stone Lake National Wildlife Refuge's request for CALFED funds to help acquire properties and water rights within Stone Lakes NWR. These properties are strategically located within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and the Stone Lakes/Cosumnes Basin. They are located adjacent to or near refuge-owned or managed lands, as well as other lands that have received CALFED funding. Protection of these lands is essential, as this area is facing heavy development pressures and much open space is being converted to vineyards or urban development. The acquisition of the water rights will undoubtedly assist with development and maintenance of aquatic habitats or the growth of seasonal crops to benefit wildlife.

Stone Lakes NWR offers prime habitat for a number of special status species, including the Sacramento splittail, giant garter snake, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, sandhill crane, Aleutian Canada goose, and many migratory geese, waterfowl, and songbirds. Habitat protection efforts within the refuge link to and complement broader efforts of the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture partners to protect critical habitat for these and other species within the Pacific Flyway.

In addition to these obvious resource benefits, one of the properties includes a large home that can be readily converted into an environmental education center; at present, there are not public facilities on the refuge. There is strong interest in the refuge's environmental education programs from a growing number of schools, particularly those in the Elk Grove School District.

Acquisition of these properties and the water right will build on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's proven track record and will assist in meeting many of CALFED's objectives for the North Delta Corridor. We urge you to give this proposal your highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniel Taylor
Chairman



APR 13 1999

County of Sacramento
Department of Regional Parks, Recreation
and Open Space



RECREATION & PARK
AND
FISH & GAME COMMISSION

April 8, 1999

RONALD D. SUTER
Director

DEPUTY DIRECTORS
Roy Imai - Planning &
Regional Parks
Gary Kukkola - American
River Parkway
Thom Oliver - Golf

Robert J. Bastian
Michele McCormick
Theodore M. Robinson
Art White
Louis Zimmerle

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This expresses support from Regional Parks Department and Sacramento County as a whole, to the grant application being submitted by Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge staff for the acquisition of 464 acres from four private landowners.

These lands are within the approved refuge boundary; acquisition of these lands would promote protection of important open spaces and therefore the protection and restoration of seasonal wetlands, riparian corridors, and grasslands. Another very important role of the Refuge that would be strengthened by these acquisitions is flood protection to the Sacramento region.

It is important to point out that refuge lands that have already been acquired and restored have shown dramatic increases in resident and migratory wildlife populations. The proposed acquisitions will extend these benefits to adjacent or nearby lands as well as benefit species at risk, including the Swainson's hawk, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, giant garter snake, Sacramento splittail, vernal pool invertebrates, and many others. But time is of the essence in this land acquisition effort for expanding the Stone Lakes National Refuge -- precious adjacent land have been approved for major urban development, vineyard conversions are rapidly occurring. The time to acquire lands available for expanding the Refuge is now.

Lastly, as a long-time partner with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the management of County-owned portion of the Refuge, it is important to state, without doubt, that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been an excellent steward of the Refuge; that through its efforts the Refuge offers assurances of continued flourishing coexistence between nature and humanity.

We urge your highest consideration of U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service' grant proposal.

Sincerely,

Ron Suter
Director

cc: Tom Harvey, USFWS

Jc (usfwsgrt.lt1)

3711 Branch Center Road, Sacramento, CA 95827
(916) 875-6961 FAX (916) 875-6050

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I-016354

National Audubon Society



California

555 Audubon Place
Sacramento, CA 95825
(916) 481-5332
(916) 481-6228 fax

National Audubon Society
Chapters of California

April 16, 1999

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Yosemite Area

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Audubon's 67,000 members and 53 affiliated local chapters in California, I urge you support funding for acquisition of 464 acres from willing sellers by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) at the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). Your matching funds will enable USFWS to offer these willing sellers the appraised fair market value of their property. Your support for these acquisition projects would ensure protection of vital habitat for birds and other wildlife, and provide increased outdoor education opportunities for many urban Californians.

Because of its proximity to Sacramento, one of the largest metropolitan regions in California, Stone Lakes NWR can serve as a convenient outdoor education forum that will complement Audubon-California's efforts to provide nature education to the citizens of California. One of the properties which USFWS can acquire with your funding assistance would provide an ideal location for a community environmental education center; existing facilities at this site could readily be converted to an education center. Audubon-California has participated in every annual public education/community outreach event at Stone Lakes NWR; public support for, and interest in, the Refuge continues to grow. We look forward to further partnering with the Refuge, local elected officials, schools, resource agencies, and landowners once a core area is acquired and then opened to the public on a year-round basis.

In addition, acquisition of the available properties represents a prime opportunity for restoration of critical wildlife habitat in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. Audubon-California is particularly excited about the potential for wetland, riparian forest, and grassland restoration projects on these properties. Restoration of these habitats would in turn benefit many special status bird species, including the Swainson's hawk, Aleutian Canada Goose, greater sandhill crane, and a host of neotropical migratory songbirds. Refuge lands that have already been acquired and restored have shown dramatic increases in resident and migratory bird populations; the proposed acquisitions will extend these benefits to adjacent or nearby lands.

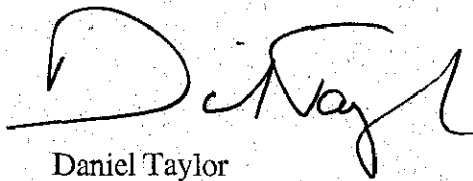
Moreover, USFWS' Concept Plan for Waterfowl Wintering Habitat Preservation: Central Valley, California identifies these habitats as important areas threatened by urban encroachment and requiring preservation. Habitat protection efforts within Stone Lakes NWR are an integral part of the broad based public-private partnership working to protect critical Central Valley habitat within the Pacific Flyway. Every parcel of land that is acquired and restored to ecosystem functions within the Refuge helps to strengthen wildlife habitat corridor linkages within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

Bobelaine Sanctuary • California Legislative Affairs Center • Los Angeles Education Center
Kern River Preserve • Mayacamas Mountain Sanctuary • McVicar Sanctuary • Richardson Bay Center and Sanctuary
Starr Ranch Sanctuary • Paul L. Wattis Sanctuary

California's economic recovery from the recent recession has been a blessing for our citizens, but it does present a challenge to habitat preservation and restoration efforts. Pressures to develop natural areas are increasing, and land values are rising accordingly. Several major urban developments and vineyard conversions already have been approved adjacent to the refuge. Audubon-California is concerned that we will lose valuable purchase opportunities within the Stone Lakes NWR project area if we do not act quickly. Consequently, we encourage you to support the Refuge's request for acquisition funding. Please do not hesitate to contact Audubon-California if we can be of any assistance to you as you consider this request.

Thank you for giving our concerns your attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Taylor", written in a cursive style.

Daniel Taylor
Executive Director

cc: Tom Harvey, USFWS

CALFED Bay-Delta Program
Page 2
April 14, 1999

urban developments and vineyard conversions have already been approved on lands adjacent to the Refuge. If funding is not available soon, the properties could be lost to other agricultural interests, particularly the aforementioned vineyard conversions.

We hope that you join us in support of this important conservation effort, and that you give this proposal your utmost consideration. Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Mathews', with a stylized, flowing script.

Nelson Mathews
Western Rivers Program Director

SACRAMENTO OPEN SPACE



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April 12, 1999

To Whom It May Concern


RE: Support of Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge request for property acquisition funding

Sacramento Open Space (SOS) is a local nonprofit volunteer organization which promotes the preservation and wise use of open space resources in Sacramento County and the surrounding region. We enthusiastically support the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge's request for funds to purchase properties from willing sellers within the Refuge boundary.

Acquisition of the properties will protect important open space resources and allow for restoration of seasonal wetlands, riparian corridors, and grasslands. It will also help to strengthen the landscape corridor linkages in the region and to provide flood protection to the Sacramento region. These lands will be added to Refuge lands that have already been acquired and restored, and have shown large increases in resident and migratory wildlife populations. The planned acquisitions and improvements will benefit species at risk, including the Giant garter snake, Swainson's hawk and Sacramento splittail.

The Stone Lakes Wildlife Refuge is a very popular and successful program, with strong support from volunteer groups, local agencies, public officials, schools and the general public. The Stone Lakes Wildlife Refuge works closely with SOS in our outreach and advocacy activities by providing tours and demonstrations of effective strategies for land acquisition, and habitat restoration and management. Acquisition of additional properties within the Refuge will help it to better respond to growing demands for public use from Sacramento County's rapidly growing urban areas.

Sincerely,


Chris Tooker
President

SACRAMENTO VALLEY OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY

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April 13, 1999

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RE: Support for Stone Lakes Refuge Land Acquisition

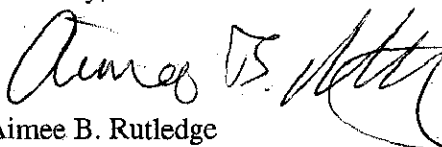
To whom it may concern:

The Sacramento Valley Open Space Conservancy supports the request for grant funds for the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. The Stone Lakes Refuge is a significant resource in our region for habitat and flood protection. It occupies a strategic position within the Delta and serves as a connection to the Cosumnes River Preserve. It has proven successful in housing many sensitive species, and has the potential to accomodate many more migratory birds and other species, including the northern pintail, Swainson's Hawk, vernal pool invertebrates, giant garter snake, Sacramento splittail, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, and many others, with additional land conservation.

The Sacramento Valley Open Space Conservancy (SVOSC) is a private, nonprofit, tax exempt organization which exists to facilitate the permanent protection and preservation of natural, agricultural, and recreational open space lands in the Sacramento Valley.

The Conservancy was founded in 1990 on two basic principles—that open lands are necessary for quality of life and that we must care for the land today so future generations may enjoy its physical and spiritual benefits tomorrow.

Sincerely,

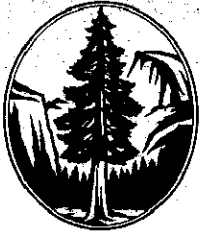

Aimee B. Rutledge

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APR 14 1999

Mother Lode Chapter
1414 K Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel: (916) 557-1100, x 108
Fax: (916) 557-9669
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April 12, 1999

To Whom It May Concern:

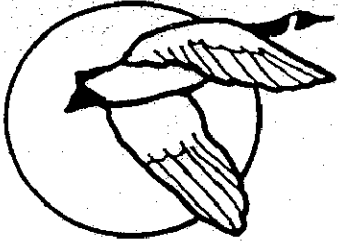
I am sending this letter on behalf of the Mother Lode Chapter of the Sierra Club to indicate our support for efforts of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to raise the funds needed to purchase additional lands at Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. Located as it is near a large urban center and within an emerging wildlife corridor, it is a valuable resource for both resident and migratory wildlife and Sacramento area citizens—especially schoolchildren.

This project has been a priority for this chapter for over ten years, and we are pleased to see that opportunities for potential funding are becoming available. We are anxious to see the Refuge acquire key parcels.

Please let me know if I can do anything to help with the project. I can be reached during the day at (916) 657-3465 or at vlee2@ibm.net.

Sincerely,

Vicki Lee
Chapter Chair



STONE LAKES REFUGE ALLIANCE

1600 DAY DRIVE • CARMICHAEL, CA 95608 • (916) 486-9624

April 8, 1999

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Land Acquisition at Stone Lakes NWR

The Stone Lakes Refuge Alliance has worked for many years to generate public support for the creation and expansion of this refuge. It is one of the newest of the National Wildlife Refuge System and one of the few located close to a major metropolitan area. As the Sacramento area's population grows and land prices rise, it is important to build up the refuge's landholdings as quickly as possible.

The Alliance fully supports the allocation of more than \$3 million, needed for four land acquisitions from willing sellers at fair market value, as well as for the purchase of water rights necessary for the refuge. These additions to the existing refuge lands will enhance its ability to provide valuable habitat for resident and migratory birds, as well as for a small but important number of endangered plant and animal species.

The establishment and growth of this refuge enjoys widespread public support, due not only to its clear wildlife benefits but also to its open space values and flood control benefits. Beyond this, the expanding refuge will be able to provide an increased level of educational opportunities to local and regional residents, through tours by school groups and the general public.

I have been personally involved in land use issues in the Stone Lakes basin since 1969 and am very pleased with the progress that has been achieved in the last few years. Your support of the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge will be very much appreciated.

Bruce Kennedy
President